

Celebrating Five Years of Increasing Access

Granite Guarantee, tuition freeze changing the game for NH students

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In the face of rising tuition costs throughout the country, the University of New Hampshire is celebrating five years of making a college education more affordable for students in the Granite State, thanks to a pair of initiatives that have combined to provide relief to thousands of students and their families.

The groundbreaking Granite Guarantee program – which allows Pell-eligible New Hampshire students to attend UNH tuition-free – is commemorating its fifth year and has benefited more than 2,000

students since its inception. Additionally, the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) recently voted to freeze in-state tuition for the fifth consecutive year, ensuring that any New Hampshire students graduating next year will have paid the same tuition for the full duration of their time in Durham.

That means in any given residence hall, classroom or crowd throughout campus you'll likely encounter someone who has been able to pursue a UNH education in part because of the measures the university has taken over the last five years to ease the burden on in-state families.

"The Granite Guarantee and in-state tuition freeze are the two most powerful steps that we have taken to make a UNH education affordable for as many New Hampshire students as possible," says UNH President Jim Dean. "I'm incredibly proud to know that over the past five years these two measures combined have benefited thousands of Granite State families and provided their students with access to life-changing opportunities right here in their home state."

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The Granite Guarantee is loan-free and bridges the gap between total federal, state and institutional aid and the cost of in-state tuition. That gap can be significant – the maximum Pell Grant award a student can receive covers about one-third of tuition costs.

The Granite Guarantee is renewable annually, allowing qualified students to pay no tuition for all four years of attendance at UNH.

The program began as an opportunity for all first-time, first-year

opportunities right here in their home state."

New Hampshire students who are eligible for federal Pell Grants, but in December 2018 was expanded to include Pell-eligible transfer students who graduated from the Community College System of New Hampshire, as well.

"The Granite Guarantee is the strongest illustration of our steadfast commitment to removing financial barriers for New Hampshire students seeking to attend UNH," says Kimberly DeRego, interim vice provost of enrollment management. "Each year since it began, we've been able to welcome hundreds of students that may otherwise not have had access to a college education. The positive impact the program has had on these students' lives, on their families and on the entire UNH community can't be overstated."

The Granite Guarantee was announced in February 2017 by former UNH President Mark Huddleston, who credited the success of the university's Celebrate 150 campaign – the largest fundraising campaign in the school's history – for making it possible to launch the inaugural year of the program. More than 400 students took advantage of the program in its first year on the Durham and Manchester campuses.

There is no separate application process to receive the Granite Guarantee – students apply to UNH as normal and submit their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). It does not cover the cost of attendance beyond tuition, such as room, board and books.

The extended in-state tuition freeze throughout USNH – coupled with key changes to the financial aid process – has also played a significant role in making a UNH education more affordable and accessible to local students. The USNH Board of Trustees recently voted in favor of continuing the freeze for the 2023-24

academic year.

At the time of last year's tuition freeze announcement, USNH institutions were providing more aid to more students than at any other time in their history, with 95% of first-year students receiving some form of institutional aid. Among the recent financial aid changes is a hallmark GPA-based merit scholarship program that streamlined the process for incoming students by automatically considering every applicant for merit scholarships based on GPA without the need for an additional application.

The impact of these initiatives has been significant – as of January 2022, New Hampshire students were paying less on average to attend USNH schools than they were five years earlier.

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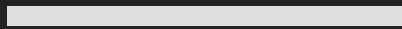
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